

REFERENCES

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- SHORT, L.L. (1982): Woodpeckers of the World, Delaware Museum of Natural History.

13. ATTEMPT BY REDVENTED BULBUL *PYCNONOTUS CAFER* TO FEED ON A YOUNG HOUSE GECKO *HEMIDACTYLUS FLAVIVIRIDIS*

The food of the redvented bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* consists of fruits and berries, flower nectar, and large insects. Among the food brought for a nestling was a young lizard 9 cm long which caused the death of a 5-6 days old chick attempting to swallow it (HANDBOOK OF BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN, Ali and Ripley 1983, Vol. 6, pp 85-88).

However, on May 20, 1999 around 0830 hrs, a bird was seen moving from one flower bed to another in our residence at Durg, Madhya Pradesh. For quite some time, the bird behaved in this manner. Ultimately, it approached a rose bed close to the boundary wall where it perched, still looking here and there. Soon it flew down to the gap between the rose plant and a bush, and pecked at a house gecko hatchling about 40 mm long. After some attempts, it managed to

catch hold of the gecko and carried it to the wall where it swung the victim's head violently from side to side and even struck it against the wall. All through, it was very agitated, and soon the crippled young gecko was placed on the ground. The bird attempted to swallow it, but the morsel appeared unmanageable, so it was left.

Similar observations were made by my brother in his garden at Raipur some time ago, but in this case, the bird kept itself stationary for quite some time before attempting to capture the juvenile gecko.

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14. FLOCKING AND ALTITUDINAL MOVEMENTS OF THE BLACK BULBUL *HYPSSIPETES MADAGASCARIENSIS* IN THE SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS, INDIA

The black bulbul (*Hypsipetes madagascariensis*) is one among several species of Indian hill birds that exhibit seasonal altitudinal movements. In the Western Ghats it breeds between 1000 m and the summits during March to June, descending to the foothills in the non-breeding season (Ali and Ripley 1983). Being mainly dependant on fruit for food, it also shares the penchant for short term local nomadic movements seen among frugivorous species, possibly tracking changes in food supply over several localities. It has been noted in the Himalayan subspecies (*H. m. psaroides*) that during the non-breeding season, the bulbuls

move "in parties of six to ten, but sometimes numbering up to a hundred individuals ..." (Ali and Ripley 1983). Here I describe some observations on flocking behaviour and daily altitudinal movements of black bulbuls in the Sengaltheri area of the Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve in southern Tamil Nadu.

The study area in the southern extremity of the Western Ghats mountain range is ca. 1000 m above msl. The vegetation is of the medium elevation wet evergreen forest type described by Pascal (1988). Systematic observations on 600 m long line transects and point counts (between 900 and 1350 m altitude) were supplemented